



## HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

H. No. 5715

---

BY REPRESENTATIVES CASIÑO, COLMENARES, ANGARA, TEODORO, RODRIGUEZ (R.), RODRIGUEZ (M.), ARENAS, QUISUMBING, ESCUDERO, TUPAS, ABAYA, DEL MAR, HERRERA-DY, TUGNA, MENDOZA (J.), KHO (A.), CRUZ-GONZALES, SAHIDULLA, ILAGAN, CLIMACO, ARAGO, AUMENTADO AND SARMIENTO (M.), PER COMMITTEE REPORT NO. 1694

---

AN ACT PROVIDING FOR THE PROTECTION, SECURITY AND BENEFITS OF WHISTLEBLOWERS, APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the Philippines in Congress assembled:*

1           SECTION 1. *Short Title.* – This Act shall be known as the  
2 “Whistleblower Protection, Security and Benefit Act of 2012”.

3           SEC. 2. *Declaration of Policy.* – Public office is a public trust. It is  
4 the policy of the State to promote and ensure full accountability in the  
5 conduct of its officers and employees, and exact full retribution from those  
6 who shall engage in graft and corrupt practices. Towards this end, the State  
7 shall:

8           (a) Maintain honest and high standards of integrity in the public  
9 service;

1 (b) Safeguard the national interest through the investigation and  
2 prosecution of corrupt and erring public officials and employees; and

3 (c) Encourage and facilitate the disclosure of corrupt conduct and  
4 practices in the public service by providing benefits and protection to  
5 whistleblowers.

6 Nothing in this Act shall diminish or restrict the entitlement, receipt or  
7 enjoyment by a whistleblower of more or higher benefits provided in  
8 existing laws.

9 SEC. 3. *Definition of Terms.* – As used in this Act, the following  
10 terms are hereby defined as follows:

11 (a) *Acts constituting graft and corruption* refer to any conduct, act or  
12 omission of public officers and employees solely, or in cooperation or  
13 conspiracy with private persons which are covered by, or constitute as  
14 violations of:

15 (1) Republic Act No. 3019, otherwise known as the “Anti-Graft and  
16 Corrupt Practices Act”;

17 (2) Sections 7, 8 and 9 of Republic Act No. 6713, otherwise known as  
18 the “Code of Conduct and Ethical Standards for Public Officials and  
19 Employees”;

20 (3) Republic Act No. 7080, entitled “An Act Defining and Penalizing  
21 the Crime of Plunder”;

22 (4) Presidential Decree No. 46, entitled “Making it Punishable for  
23 Public Officials and Employees to Receive, and for Private Persons to Give,  
24 Gifts on Any Occasion, Including Christmas”; and

25 (5) Title VII, Book Two of the Revised Penal Code on “Crimes  
26 Committed by Public Officers”.

27 (b) *Council* refers to the Whistleblower Benefits and Protection  
28 Council created pursuant to Section 29 of this Act.

1 (c) *Employee* refers to any person who is made to suffer work by, or  
2 who renders service for, an employer. The term shall include public officers  
3 and employees as defined in this Act as well as any person considered an  
4 “employee” under the Labor Code.

5 (d) *Employer* refers to any individual, partnership, association,  
6 corporation or entity, including the government, or any person or group of  
7 persons who shall directly or indirectly for or on behalf of said individual,  
8 partnership, association, corporation or entity, hires an employee as defined  
9 in this Act.

10 (e) *Government* refers to the National Government and any of its  
11 subdivisions, agencies or instrumentalities, including government-owned and  
12 -controlled corporations and their subsidiaries, and the local government  
13 units (LGUs).

14 (f) *Informant* refers to any person who has personal knowledge or  
15 access to data, events or information, of any conduct constituting graft and  
16 corruption as defined under this Act by public officer/s and employee/s, and  
17 who shall deliberately disclose of individual, collective or organized conduct  
18 constituting graft and corruption as provided in this Act.

19 (g) *Program* refers to the “Whistleblower Protection, Security and  
20 Benefit Program” which the Council shall formulate and implement pursuant  
21 to this Act.

22 (h) *Public officer* refers to any person holding any public office in the  
23 Government of the Republic of the Philippines by virtue of an appointment,  
24 election or contract.

25 (i) *Whistleblower* refers to an informant admitted into the Program of  
26 the Council in accordance with this Act and its rules and regulations.

27 (j) *Reprisal* refers to any negative or obstructive response or reaction  
28 to a disclosure made under this Act aimed at, pertaining to, or against a

1 whistleblower or any of the members of the family and relatives up to the  
2 second degree of consanguinity or affinity including, but not limited to,  
3 criminal, civil or administrative proceedings commenced or pursued against  
4 said whistleblower or any of the members of the family or relatives up to the  
5 second degree of consanguinity or affinity as well as reprisal in the  
6 workplace.

7 (k) *Reprisal in workplace* refers to any discriminatory conduct or  
8 policies against a whistleblower which affect promotion or job assignment  
9 including undue negative performance appraisal, unusual and unwarranted  
10 close monitoring by supervisors, unwarranted criticisms or avoidance by  
11 co-employees, blacklisting from other job opportunities or prejudicial  
12 transfers by reason of a disclosure made under this Act.

13 SEC. 4. *Coverage.* – Conduct constituting graft and corruption,  
14 whether commenced or consummated before the effectivity of this Act,  
15 refers to any conduct, act or omission of public officers and/or employees  
16 solely, or in cooperation or conspiracy with private persons which are  
17 covered by, or amount to violations of Presidential Decree No. 46; Republic  
18 Act No. 3019; Sections 7, 8 and 9 of Republic Act No. 6713; Republic Act  
19 No. 7080; and Title VII, Book Two of the Revised Penal Code on “Crimes  
20 Committed by Public Officers”.

21 SEC. 5. *Admission to the Program.* – Whistleblowers admitted into  
22 the Program, whether from the public or private sector, shall be entitled to  
23 the protection and benefits under this Act: *Provided*, That all the following  
24 requisites concur:

25 (a) The disclosure is voluntary, in writing and under oath;

26 (b) The disclosure relates to conduct constituting graft and corruption  
27 under this Act;

1 (c) Such disclosure is necessary for an effective and successful  
2 investigation or prosecution, or essential for the acquisition of material  
3 evidence not yet in the possession of the Council;

4 (d) The information given by the whistleblower can be corroborated;  
5 and

6 (e) The information disclosed leads to a successful gathering of  
7 evidence and/or conduct of investigation sufficient to sustain a finding of  
8 probable cause for the filing of a criminal complaint or information before a  
9 court of competent jurisdiction.

10 SEC. 6. *Necessity of Testimony.* – The testimony of a whistleblower  
11 in court shall not be necessary for the entitlement to the benefits and  
12 protection under this Act, subject to the provision of Section 17 herein. In  
13 the event that the whistleblower’s testimony is determined by the Council to  
14 be necessary and indispensable to the success of an investigation or the  
15 prosecution of a case, the whistleblower shall be entitled to the additional  
16 benefits and protection under Republic Act No. 6981, otherwise known as  
17 the “Witness Protection, Security and Benefit Act”.

18 SEC. 7. *Memorandum of Agreement With the Whistleblower.* – As a  
19 prerequisite to the availment of the protection and benefits under this Act, a  
20 whistleblower shall enter into a Memorandum of Agreement with the  
21 Department of Justice (DOJ) which shall set forth the whistleblower’s  
22 responsibilities including the following:

23 (a) To provide information to and testify before all inquiries, in aid  
24 of legislation, and before any law enforcement official concerning any  
25 appropriate proceeding in connection with or arising from the activities  
26 involved in the offense subject matter thereof;

27 (b) To avoid a commission of a crime involving moral turpitude;

28 (c) To take all necessary precautions to avoid detection by others of  
29 the facts concerning the protection provided under this Act;

1 (d) To cooperate with respect to all reasonable requests of officers  
2 and employees of the government who are providing protection under this  
3 Act; and

4 (e) To regularly inform the appropriate program official of the  
5 whistleblower's current activities and address.

6 SEC. 8. *Breach of the Memorandum of Agreement.* – Substantial  
7 breach of the Memorandum of Agreement shall be a ground for the  
8 immediate termination of the protection and benefits provided under this  
9 Act. The Council shall send notice to a whistleblower concerned, stating  
10 therein the reason for such termination. In view thereof, a whistleblower  
11 shall be afforded reasonable time to take appropriate and necessary  
12 protection and security measures.

13 In addition, the whistleblower shall return all the financial rewards  
14 received pursuant to Section 17 of this Act.

15 SEC. 9. *Protection Against Other Actions.* – A whistleblower or an  
16 informant who has made a disclosure under this Act shall not be subject to  
17 any liability in any proceeding. Any disclosure made or any document  
18 submitted to the Council shall be inadmissible in evidence against the  
19 whistleblower.

20 This protection shall also operate as immunity in favor of a  
21 whistleblower or informant against any action or proceeding taken against  
22 the whistleblower by any person subject of a disclosure, by reason thereof  
23 and acts in relation to subject of disclosure.

24 SEC. 10. *Defense of Privileged Communication.* – A whistleblower  
25 or any person who has made a disclosure under this Act shall have, as  
26 defense in any other inquiry or proceeding, the absolute privilege with  
27 respect to the subject matter of the disclosure or information given to the  
28 proper authorities.

1           SEC. 11. *Confidentiality.* – Except as allowed by this Act, during and  
2 after a disclosure, and throughout and after any proceeding taken thereafter,  
3 a whistleblower or an informant is entitled to absolute confidentiality about:

- 4           (a) Whistleblower’s identity;  
5           (b) The subject matter of the disclosure; and  
6           (c) The person to whom such disclosure was made.

7           There shall be no such confidentiality of identity if a whistleblower or  
8 an informant makes a public disclosure of a conduct constituting graft and  
9 corruption unless, notwithstanding such public disclosure, the whistleblower  
10 has taken means and measures obviously intended to preserve anonymity.

11           SEC. 12. *No Breach of Duty of Confidentiality.* – A whistleblower or  
12 an informant who has made a disclosure under this Act, on whom a  
13 provision of law, regulation, issuance, practice or other convention, imposes  
14 a duty to maintain confidentiality with respect to any information disclosed,  
15 is considered not to have committed a breach thereof.

16           SEC. 13. *Confidential Information.* – No person to whom a disclosure  
17 has been made or referred shall divulge any information that may identify or  
18 tend to identify a whistleblower or informant or reveal the subject matter of  
19 such disclosure, except under the following circumstances:

- 20           (a) The whistleblower or the informant consents in writing prior to a  
21 disclosure of an information;  
22           (b) The disclosure is indispensable and essential as determined by the  
23 Council, having regard to the necessary proceedings to be taken after the  
24 disclosure; or  
25           (c) The disclosure or referral is made pursuant to an obligation under  
26 this Act.

27           The prohibition on disclosure under this section shall apply to any  
28 person who has become privy to any confidential information, whether  
29 officially or by other means.

1           SEC. 14. *Protection Against Disciplinary Action or Reprisals.* – A  
2 whistleblower who has made or is believed or suspected to have made a  
3 disclosure under this Act is not liable to disciplinary action for making said  
4 disclosure.

5           Prohibited acts under this section include reprisals in the workplace or  
6 prejudicial conduct towards a whistleblower such as: discriminatory actions  
7 behind policies and procedures, unwarranted reprimand, punitive transfers,  
8 malicious referral to a psychiatrist or counselor, and unfounded or baseless  
9 poor performance reviews. Other prejudicial actions include obstruction of  
10 an investigation, withdrawal of essential resources, undue reports and the  
11 attachment of false personnel files or notes.

12           To this end, any employer who shall discourage and impose sanctions  
13 or reprisals based on workplaces interaction, which shall include workplace  
14 ostracism, questions and attacks on motives, accusations of disloyalty and  
15 dysfunction, public humiliation, and the denial of work or promotion, or who  
16 encourages, causes or does retaliatory action or reprisal against the  
17 whistleblower or anyone believed or suspected to be one, shall be liable for  
18 an offense defined under this Act.

19           Any employee who refuses to follow orders of employers that would  
20 cause them to violate any provision of this Act shall likewise be protected  
21 from reprisals and retaliatory action in the workplace.

22           For purposes of this protection, an applicant for employment shall be  
23 deemed an employee and entitled to such protection: *Provided, however,*  
24 That an employer of a whistleblower shall be notified through a certification  
25 issued by the Council, within a period of thirty (30) days from the date when  
26 the whistleblower last reported for work: *Provided, further,* That an  
27 employer shall have the option to remove said whistleblower from  
28 employment after securing a clearance from the Council and the Department



1 of Labor and Employment (DOLE) in case of a prolonged absence due to  
2 transfer or permanent relocation under this Act or Republic Act No. 6981.

3 SEC. 15. *Security and Protection of a Whistleblower.* – When  
4 determined to be necessary and appropriate by the Council, a whistleblower,  
5 even if the disclosure is made in confidence, shall be entitled to personal  
6 security. For this purpose, the Council may request any law enforcement  
7 agency for assistance. Should, at anytime, the identity of the whistleblower  
8 be revealed, or anonymity compromised, the whistleblower may, upon the  
9 recommendation of the Council, be entitled to the benefits of Republic Act  
10 No. 6981, in addition to the other benefits under this Act.

11 SEC. 16. *Confidentiality of the Proceedings.* – All proceedings  
12 before the Council involving application and/or enjoyment of the benefits  
13 under this Act, including any action taken thereon, shall be confidential in  
14 nature. No information or documents given or submitted in support thereof  
15 shall be released except upon written order of the Council, and provided  
16 such disclosure shall not endanger the life of a whistleblower.

17 SEC. 17. *Financial Rewards for Whistleblowers.* – The whistleblower  
18 shall be entitled to a corresponding monetary reward in accordance with the  
19 following stages:

| Stages  | If the case is susceptible<br>of pecuniary estimation | If the case is not<br>susceptible of<br>pecuniary estimation |
|---|---|--|
| 23 Upon admission<br>24 into the program                                | P200,000.00   | P100,000.00  |
| 25 Upon filing of the<br>26 case with the Office<br>27 of the Ombudsman | P100,000.00   | P 50,000.00  |
| 28 Upon completion of<br>29 the testimony of the<br>30 whistleblower    | P100,000.00   | P 50,000.00  |

1           For cases susceptible to pecuniary estimation, such as plunder,  
2           forfeiture of ill-gotten wealth, bribery, malversation and damage or injury to  
3           government, the whistleblower shall be entitled to an additional reward of  
4           ten percent (10%) of the actual amount recovered by final judgment.

5           SEC. 18. *Return of the Amount Received as Financial Rewards.* –

6           A whistleblower admitted into the Program who deliberately and voluntarily  
7           gives false or misleading information in connection with conduct  
8           constituting graft and corruption as defined under this Act or who  
9           unjustifiably recants testimony shall, in addition to the penalties provided in  
10          Section 21 and Section 22 of this Act, be required to return all the amounts  
11          received as financial rewards.

12          SEC. 19. *Abstract.* – All government agencies, offices, bureaus and  
13          LGUs, including government-owned or -controlled corporations, whether or  
14          not with original charters, shall conspicuously display an abstract of this Act  
15          and the rights and protections of whistleblowers or informants, including the  
16          obligations of employers under this Act. Such abstract shall be provided in  
17          the rules and regulations to be promulgated pursuant to Section 31 of this  
18          Act.

19          All government agencies, offices, bureaus and LGUs, including  
20          government-owned and -controlled corporations, whether or not with  
21          original charters, are likewise required to put in place internal procedures for  
22          dealing with whistleblowers or informants, consistent with the provisions of  
23          this Act and the rules and regulations. Said internal procedure shall be  
24          widely disseminated to all the employees.

25          SEC. 20. *Credibility of a Whistleblower.* – In all cases, the fact of the  
26          entitlement of the whistleblower to the protection and benefits provided in  
27          this Act shall not be admissible in evidence to diminish or affect the  
28          whistleblower's credibility.

1           SEC. 21. *Penalty for Giving False and Misleading Information.* –

2           The penalty of imprisonment of not less than six (6) years but not more than  
3           twelve (12) years shall be imposed upon a whistleblower who deliberately  
4           and voluntarily gives false or misleading information in connection with  
5           conduct constituting graft and corruption under this Act. If the offender is a  
6           public officer or employee, the penalty of dismissal from the service and the  
7           accessory penalty of perpetual absolute disqualification from holding public  
8           office shall also be imposed. In addition, the offender may be held  
9           criminally and civilly liable under existing laws.

10           SEC. 22. *Penalty for Unjustified Recantation.* – The unjustified

11           recantation of testimony by a whistleblower shall constitute an offense and  
12           shall be punishable by a penalty of imprisonment of not less than four (4)  
13           years but not more than six (6) years.

14           SEC. 23. *Penalty for Reprisal Against Whistleblower.* – The penalty

15           of imprisonment of not less than six (6) years but not more than twelve (12)  
16           years or a fine of not more than One hundred thousand pesos  
17           (Php100,000.00), or both, at the discretion of the court shall be imposed  
18           upon any person who shall commit any act of reprisal as defined in this Act  
19           against a whistleblower and/or hinders, delays, prevents or dissuades said  
20           whistleblower from:

21           (a) Attending, assisting or testifying before any investigating agency  
22           or judicial or quasi-judicial body;

23           (b) Reporting to a law enforcement officer or judge the commission or  
24           possible commission of an offense, or a violation of conditions of probation,  
25           parole, or release pending judicial proceedings;

26           (c) Seeking the arrest of another person in connection with the  
27           offense;

1 (d) Causing a criminal prosecution, or any proceeding for the  
2 revocation of a parole or probation; and

3 (e) Performing and enjoying the rights and benefits under this Act or  
4 attempt to do so.

5 In addition, the penalty of dismissal from the service and the accessory  
6 penalty of perpetual absolute disqualification from holding public office  
7 shall be imposed upon an offender who is a public officer or employee.

8 SEC. 24. *Penalty for Violation of Confidentiality.* – The penalty of  
9 imprisonment of not less than six (6) months but not more than six (6) years  
10 shall be imposed upon any person who shall violate the protection of  
11 confidentiality of a protected disclosure under Sections 10, 11, 13 and 16 of  
12 this Act. The penalty of dismissal from the service and the accessory penalty  
13 of temporary absolute disqualification from holding public office shall also  
14 be imposed upon an offender who is a public officer or employee. In  
15 addition, the offender shall be civilly liable to indemnify the whistleblower  
16 or informant in such amount of damages as may be awarded and deemed  
17 reasonable by a competent court.

18 SEC. 25. *Penalty for Reprisal in the Workplace.* – The penalty of  
19 imprisonment of not more than six (6) years but not more than twelve (12)  
20 years shall be imposed upon any person who shall commit any act of reprisal  
21 in the workplace as defined in this Act, against an employee who is a  
22 whistleblower or believed or suspected to be one. The penalty of dismissal  
23 from the service and the accessory penalty of temporary absolute  
24 disqualification from holding public office shall also be imposed upon an  
25 offender who is a public officer or employee. In addition, the offender shall  
26 be civilly liable to indemnify the whistleblower in such amount of damages  
27 as may be awarded and deemed reasonable by a competent court.

1           Towards this end, an aggrieved whistleblower shall be entitled to the  
2 provisional remedy of injunction against any reprisal in the workplace,  
3 prejudicial conduct, or discriminatory treatment by reason of  
4 whistleblower's disclosure.

5           The proceedings herein shall be independent of any action that an  
6 aggrieved person may take before the Civil Service Commission or the  
7 DOLE for unfair or discriminatory practices, backwages, or other labor  
8 disputes, or before other quasi-judicial agencies that may or may not have  
9 arisen from a disclosure or believed or suspected disclosure.

10           SEC. 26. *Penalty for Discriminatory Hiring.* – The penalty of  
11 imprisonment of not more than six (6) months shall be imposed upon any  
12 person or employer who shall deny a qualified applicant for employment, or  
13 who shall reject an application for employment solely on the ground that an  
14 applicant is a whistleblower or informant for the State. If the offender is a  
15 corporation, partnership, association, or any juridical person, the penalty  
16 shall be imposed upon the owner, president, partner, manager and/or any  
17 responsible officer who participated in the commission of the offense.

18           The penalty of dismissal from the service and the accessory penalty of  
19 suspension of the right to hold public office shall also be imposed upon the  
20 offender who is a public officer or employee.

21           In addition, the offender shall be civilly liable to indemnify the  
22 whistleblower in such amount of damages as may be awarded and deemed  
23 reasonable by a competent court.

24           SEC. 27. *Failure of an Employer to Post Abstract.* – The failure to  
25 post an abstract required under Section 19 of this Act shall constitute an  
26 offense and shall be punishable with a fine of One hundred thousand pesos  
27 (Php100,000.00) for the first offense. The amount shall be doubled for

1 every succeeding offense, and punishable with imprisonment of not more  
2 than six (6) months at the discretion of the court. For this purpose, the  
3 president, general manager, or head of agency, office or bureau shall be held  
4 criminally liable and shall suffer the accessory penalty of suspension of the  
5 right to hold public office.

6 SEC. 28. *Failure to Act or Report to the Council.* – Any person  
7 under obligation to report a disclosure under this Act to the Council, who  
8 fails to do so within a period of two (2) months, or who fails to act thereon  
9 or cause an investigation thereof, shall be held liable and shall suffer the  
10 penalty of not more than one (1) month imprisonment or a fine of not more  
11 than Fifty thousand pesos (Php50,000.00) at the discretion of the court.

12 SEC. 29. *Whistleblower Benefits and Protection Council.* – A  
13 Whistleblower Benefits and Protection Council is hereby created composed  
14 of the Overall Deputy Ombudsman as Chairperson, and the following as  
15 members:

- 16 (a) Prosecutor General, DOJ;  
17 (b) Special Prosecutor, Ombudsman;  
18 (c) Witness Protection Program Director, DOJ;  
19 (d) Executive Director, Anti-Money Laundering Council;  
20 (e) Director, Legal Service, Philippine National Police, in case the  
21 respondent is a member thereof;  
22 (f) The Judge Advocate General of the Armed Forces of the  
23 Philippines, in case the respondent is a member thereof;  
24 (g) A representative from the civil society/nongovernment  
25 organization involved in anti-corruption and good governance to be  
26 appointed by the Chairperson of the Council, upon the recommendation of  
27 the members thereof; and

1 (h) A representative from the business sector to be appointed by the  
2 Chairperson of the Council, upon the recommendation of the *Philippine*  
3 Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

4 The existing personnel of the Office of the Ombudsman shall serve as  
5 secretariat to the Council.

6 SEC. 30. *Powers and Functions of the Council.* – In addition to its  
7 powers and functions under existing laws, the Council shall have the  
8 following powers and functions:

9 (a) Monitor, coordinate and evaluate all efforts relative to the  
10 implementation and enforcement of the provisions of this Act;

11 (b) Evaluate the disclosure and qualification of whistleblowers or  
12 informants for coverage within this Act, and make the appropriate decision  
13 on their entitlement to the benefits extended herein;

14 (c) Undertake, in coordination and cooperation with the private and  
15 public sectors, an information campaign to educate the public on the  
16 provisions and benefits of this Act;

17 (d) Develop plans and implement programs to further encourage  
18 whistleblowers or informants on graft and corrupt activities with a view to  
19 effective deterrence and/or prosecution;

20 (e) Control and administer, consistent with the provisions and  
21 purposes of this Act, the protection and benefits of whistleblowers in  
22 connection with the cases within the coverage of Section 4 of this Act;

23 (f) Call upon, or deputize any department, bureau, office or any other  
24 government agency or public official to assist in the effective  
25 implementation and enforcement of this Act; and

26 (g) Grant immunity in accordance with the provisions of this Act and  
27 its implementing rules and regulations.

1           SEC. 31. *Appropriations.* – The amount necessary to carry out the  
2 provisions of this Act shall be included in the annual *General Appropriations*  
3 *Act*.

4           SEC. 32. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* – The Council shall  
5 promulgate such rules and regulations as may be necessary to implement the  
6 intent and purposes of this Act. Said rules and regulations shall be published  
7 in two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

8           SEC. 33. *Separability Clause.* – If any portion or provision of this  
9 Act or the application thereof shall be declared invalid or unconstitutional,  
10 the validity of other parts or provisions not affected thereby shall continue to  
11 be in full force and effect.

12           SEC. 34. *Repealing Clause.* – All laws, decrees, executive issuances,  
13 rules and regulations inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed or  
14 modified accordingly.

15           SEC. 35. *Effectivity Clause.* – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15)  
16 days following its complete publication in two (2) newspapers of general  
17 circulation.

Approved,

○